UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/PRST/1997/16
19 March 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 3754th meeting of the Security Council, held on 19 March 1997 in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation concerning Western Sahara", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council welcomes the interim report of the Secretary-General of 27 February 1997 on the situation concerning Western Sahara (S/1997/166). It is disappointed at the lack of progress on the implementation of the Plan for the settlement of the question of Western Sahara noted in the report. It concurs with the Secretary-General's assessment that it is essential to maintain the ceasefire, a breach of which could seriously threaten regional stability, and that it is also essential to move the process forward. It believes that the presence of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) has been essential in helping the parties to maintain their commitment to the ceasefire. It looks forward to receiving the Secretary-General's assessment of the future tasks and configuration of MINURSO.

"The Security Council expresses its strong support for the Secretary-General's efforts to overcome the current stalemate in implementing the settlement plan. In this context, it welcomes the appointment by the Secretary-General of a Personal Envoy to the region and urges the parties to cooperate fully with him."

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